

# DEVIL'S SWAMP LAKE

## Baton Rouge, Louisiana

EPA ID#: LAD981155872

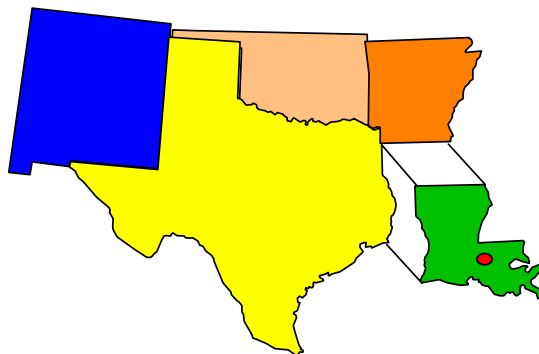
### EPA Region 6

**State Congressional District: 06**

East Baton Rouge Parish

Updated: July 2004

Next Update: August 2004



### Current Status

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The site was proposed to the NPL list in the *Federal Register* on March 8, 2004. The EPA established a public comment period and will make a final listing decision after considering the relevant comments if the site continues to meet the requirements for listing.

### Site Description

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Devil's Swamp Lake is characterized as a man-made lake, resulting from the construction of Baton Rouge harbor in 1973.

**Site Responsibility:** Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6.

**NPL Listing History:** Proposed Date: 3/8/2004

Final Date: Pending

### Cleanup Progress

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The identification of the site for the NPL is intended to guide the EPA in:

determining which sites warrant further investigation to assess the nature and extent of the human health and environmental risks associated with a site.

### Site Contacts

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Remedial Project Manager  
Bartolome J. Canellas  
(214) 665-6662

Community Involvement Coordinator  
Janetta Coats  
1-888-533-3508

## Expanded Site Description

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- Location:**
- Devil's Swamp consists of a large flood plain area near Scotlandville, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, about ten miles north of the City of Baton Rouge.
  - Devil's Swamp is also a freshwater wetland covering approximately 31 square kilometers (12 square miles) of land along the Mississippi River.
  - Bayou Baton Rouge is part of the swamp drainage system, it extends from the northern portion of the site and meanders approximately 12 kilometers south to the discharge in the Mississippi River.
  - Within the swamp, the "Oxbow" or "U" shaped Devil's Swamp Lake is approximately 0.75 miles (4,200 feet) in length, 1/12 miles (400 feet) wide, some 20 feet deep at its deepest parts, and covers approximately 64 acres.
  - Devil's Swamp Lake is characterized as a man-made lake, resulting from the construction of Baton Rouge harbor in 1973.
  - Devil's Swamp Lake is adjacent to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitted outfall of the Clean Harbors Environmental Services, Inc. facility (formerly Rollins Environmental Services of Louisiana, Inc.). PCBs have been documented in the lake and the outfall canal.
  - The coordinates for this site are North Latitude 30° 33 '43" and West Longitude -91° 13' 14".
- Population:**
- City of Baton Rouge (population 602,894 in 2002)(Metro statistical area).
  - Parish of East Baton Rouge (population 412,952 in 2000)(U.S. Census Bureau).
  - The community is predominantly rural with a few houses located about 800 to 1000 feet from the Bayou Baton Rouge, near the northern portion of the swamp and the crossing of Bayou Baton Rouge under Scenic Highway.
  - Prior to 1950's, the area consisted of scattered agricultural farms, pasture land and some timber. Rapid industrialization throughout the 1960's and 1970's resulted in numerous industrial facilities in areas surrounding Devil's Swamp.
  - Major residential areas include Scotlandville, and residential communities along Highway 61, Scenic Highway, east of Devil's Swamp. This includes the Alsen Community.
- Setting:**
- Industrial facilities have discharged to the swamp since the 1960's and the 1970's.
  - The swamp to the north of the lake is characterized by numerous small open ponds and water tupelo trees. This 262-acre area extends approximately 1.0 miles (5,500 feet) to the Devil's Swamp Lake.
  - The swamp to the south of the lake is characterized also by numerous small open ponds and water tupelo trees. This 684-acre area extends approximately 2.2 miles (11,500 feet) to the Mississippi River and is subject to frequent backwater encroachment from the river.
- Hydrology:**
- Devil's Swamp Lake, Bayou Baton Rouge and Devil's Swamp are within the Mississippi River flood plain. The Mississippi flood plain is a fresh water Wetlands.

## Expanded Present Status and Issues

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- The site was proposed to the NPL list in the *Federal Register* on March 8, 2004.
- The EPA established a public comment period and considers all comments received during a 60-day period following the publication date in the Federal Register. The EPA will make a final listing decision after considering the relevant comments if the site continues to meet the requirements for listing.
- This comment period started on March 8, 2004 and closed on May 7, 2004. To review comments submitted, they can be view using the Internet at EDOCKETS, the address is <http://www.epa.gov/edocket> under docket SFUND-2004-0004.

- For other information, the public may contact the Docket Coordinator by mail at:  
  
Attention Docket ID No. SFUND-2004-0004  
Docket Coordinator, Headquarters  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
CERCLA Docket Office  
Mail Code 5305T  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW.  
Washington, DC 20460
- In the meantime, the EPA and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) are preparing a response to comments and continue enforcement activities to identify Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs) before commencing a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) at this site.

## Wastes and Volumes

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- Sampling conducted by the State in 1980's identified the presence of Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the lake and in a drainage ditch or outfall canal leading to the former Rollins facility. PCBs are a category or family of chemical compounds.
- Concentrations of PCBs have been observed in several samples collected by the EPA during a 1993 Expanded Site Inspection. Some samples show concentrations of PCBs congeners of up to 5.2 mg/kg of Aroclor-1248, 6.4 mg/kg of Aroclor-1254 and 1.6 mg/kg of Aroclor-1260. Congeners are well-defined chemical compounds in the PCB category.
- The extent of contamination and volume of contamination have not been established

## National Priorities List

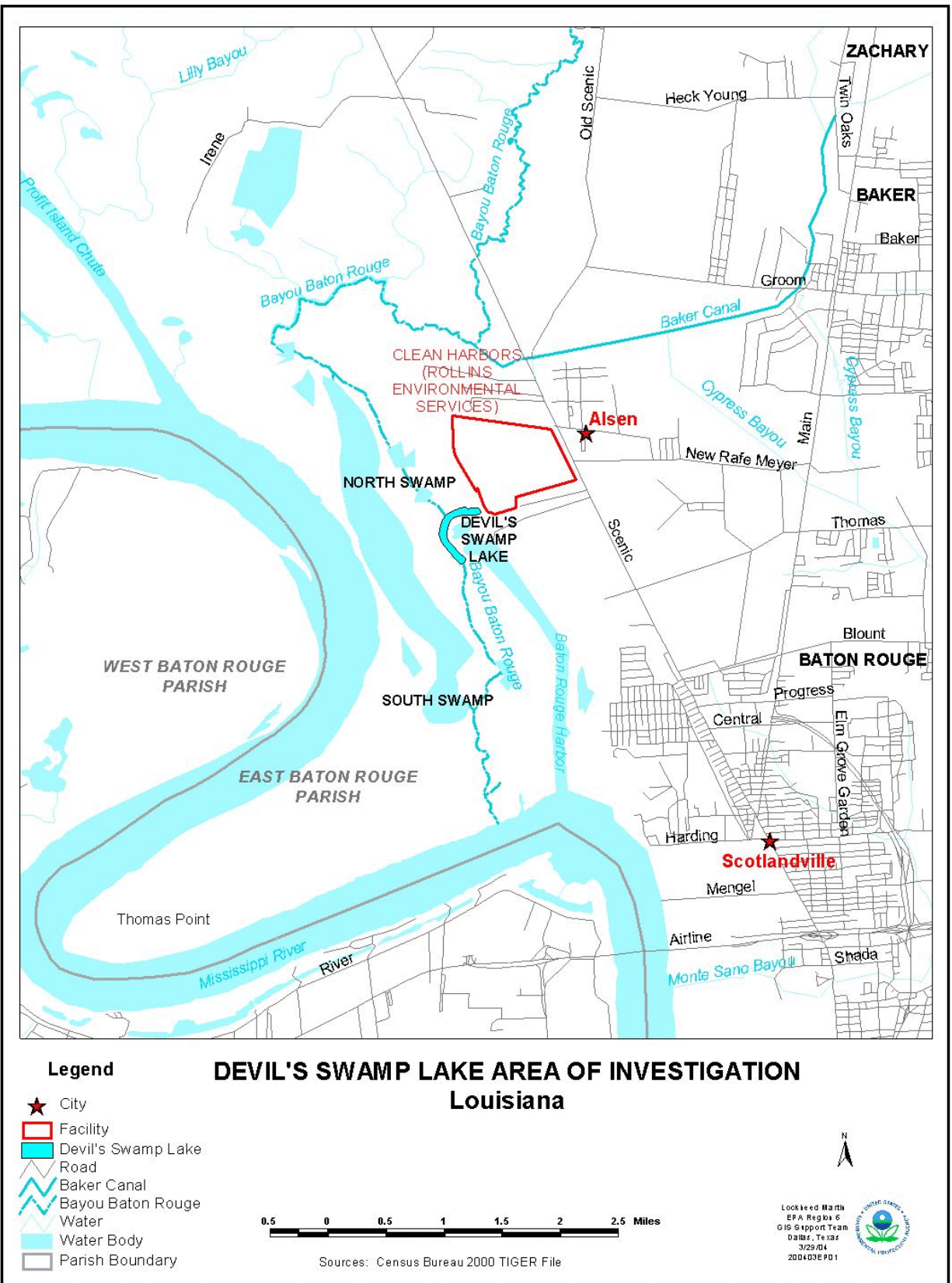
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NPL Inclusion Proposal Date:	March 8, 2004.
NPL Inclusion Final Date:	n/a
NPL Deletion Proposal Date:	n/a
NPL Deletion Final Date:	n/a

## Site Map

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See next page.



## Expanded Site History

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- Rapid industrialization throughout the 1960's and 1970's resulted in numerous waste storage pits and releases of hazardous substances in areas surrounding the Devil's Swamp.
- Devil's Swamp Lake is a man-made lake situated between the northern and southern regions of Devil's Swamp.
- The lake was created in 1973 from the dredging of sediments that were used as embankment fill for reinforcing the levee along Baton Rouge Harbor. Baton Rouge Harbor is located just south of Devil's Swamp Lake along the east side of Devil's Swamp. Devil's Swamp Lake is oxbow-shaped having a width of approximately 122 m (400 ft) and a length of about 1,280 m (4,200 ft). The dredged out area of the lake covers approximately 15.8 hectares (39 acres), however the overall lake area is about 26 hectares (64 acres) as a result of natural ponds that connect directly to the dredged area.
- During flood conditions, the western and northern boundaries of the lake are indistinct as it coalesces with water of the surrounding swamp. A centerline depth ranging from approximately 3.0 to 7.6 m (10 to 25 ft) has been measured in the lake during low water conditions. However the lake stage, and thus the lake depth, varies considerably from the high-water season in the spring to the low water season in the fall. The lake stage was observed to fluctuate 3.0 to 4.6 m (10 to 15 ft) between high and low water sampling events.
- Mississippi River hydrographs by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) shows a yearly average stage variations of up to 20 feet near Baton Rouge.
- Clean Harbors Environmental Services, Inc. (Clean Harbors), formerly Rollins Environmental Services of Louisiana, Inc. (Rollins), is located north of the Baton Rouge Barge Harbor and west of Scenic Highway. Rollins began operating a hazardous chemical disposal facility here in 1971. Most of the landfill cells and receiving basins were below grade and used the natural clay soils for liners. In 1980, Rollins initiated improvements to the facility which included excavation of previous disposal units, the construction of new landfills with liners (clay and synthetic), and implementation of a groundwater monitoring and recovery program.
- Sediment sampling conducted by the LDEQ (1986) and the EPA confirmed the presence of PCBs in Devil's Swamp Lake and along the effluent wastewater drainage ditch or outfall from the former Rollins facility.
- The Clean Harbors facility have a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit allowing treated wastewater and storm water to be discharged since April 20, 1970. The facility outfall historically discharged to the north end of Devil's Swamp Lake before the present discharge line of the treated wastewater to the Mississippi River was installed an permitted on June 2, 1993.
- Currently, Clean Harbors is also permitted under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments (HSWA).
- The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, in conjunction with the LDEQ, issued an advisory to limit fish consumption to two meals per month and avoid swimming in Devil's Swamp Lake, Devil's Swamp and Bayou Baton Rouge.

## Enforcement History

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- General Notice Letter and 104(e) information request letter was sent to identified PRPs in December 2003.

## Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment

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- Several Preliminary Assessments and Site Inspections were completed by the EPA. More recently, in 1995, the EPA completed a Screening Level Risk Assessment (SLRA). This screening report indicated a potential for adverse risk.

- Based on the limited information available in 1995, it appears that contaminants could be posing adverse effects to biota utilizing the site, thus, the EPA initiated a comprehensive risk assessment to further collect more information, evaluate the site and the potential risk.
- In 1997, the EPA conducted sampling activities during high and low flow conditions. Data collected was analyzed and validated in 1998.
- A Human Health Risk Assessment and an Ecological Risk Assessment were completed in early 1999 by the EPA.
- The Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessments have shown that concentrations of PCBs can produce unacceptable risks to human health and the environment.

## Record of Decision

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- Signed: No record of decision yet.

## Community Involvement

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- Community Involvement Plan: Not Yet Issued.
- Open houses and workshops: Not Yet Issued.
- Proposed Plan Fact Sheet: Not Yet Issued.
- Proposed Plan Public Meeting: Not Yet Issued.
- ROD Fact Sheet: Not Yet Issued.
- Milestone Fact Sheets: Not Yet Issued.
- Citizens on site mailing list: Not Yet Issued.
- Site Repository:

Scotlandville Branch Library  
7373 Scenic Hwy.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70808  
225-354-7500

Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality  
(Reference: Agency Interest #86800)  
602 North 5th St.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802  
225-219-3172

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
12th Floor, Suite 1200, 12D13  
1445 Ross Ave  
Dallas, TX 75202  
1-800-533-3508

## Technical Assistance Grant

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- Availability Notice: 1<sup>st</sup> newspaper notice 3/17/2004 in the Baton Rouge Advocate newspaper; fact sheet 3/17/04; 2<sup>nd</sup> newspaper notice 5/1/04.
- Letters of Intent (LOI) received:
  - 1) 4/27/04 - North Baton Rouge Environmental Association
  - 2) 5/10/04 - North Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce
  - 3) 5/24/04 - Alsen Environmental Justice Community Organization (AEJCO)
- On 6/21/04, AEJCO requested an application deadline extension. Deadline was extended to 7/21/04 and on 6/24/04, all potential applicants were notified of the application deadline extension.

Applicants were also asked to contact site RPM to secure copy of draft schedule of anticipated activities for development of TAG application Statement of Work.

- Final Application Received: N/A
- Grant Award: N/A
- Current Status: N/A

## Site Contacts

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EPA Remedial Project Manager:	Bartolome J. Cañellas	214.665.6662 or 800.533.3508
EPA Site Attorney:	James Bove	214.665.2794 or 800.533.3508
EPA Community Involvement:	Janetta Coats	214.665.7308 or 800.533.3508
EPA Press Officer:	Dave Barry	214.665.2208 or 800.533.3508
EPA Contractor:		
EPA Regional Public Liaison:	Arnold Ondarza	1.800.533.3508
LDEQ Louisiana State Contact:	Thomas Stafford	225.219.3222 or 800.763.5424